



The City of Morgantown

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Power of Change Program Continues to Help Homeless

The meters installed last year are raising money for local agencies who serve those in need.

MORGANTOWN – Three refurbished parking meters are contributing to an improvement in quality of life for some Morgantown residents.

Last year, the City of Morgantown partnered with the United Way of Monongalia and Preston Counties to install 'Power of Change' meters in three locations downtown. These meters are intended to collect change from those who'd like to give to the homeless, but want to ensure that the funds go directly to food, shelter, and clothing.

Through a random draw, United Way distributes collected funds monthly to one of six local agencies who service the homeless population:

- Bartlett House
- Christian Help
- Community Kitchen
- Mental Health America (Friendship Room)
- MP Health Right
- Salvation Army

Krista Sheets, Community Impact Director at United Way, reports that roughly \$360 has been collected from the downtown meters. Donations were higher in last year's warmer months, she said, but when the cold weather hit, donations fell slightly – and haven't recovered as much as expected.

The Power of Change meters are located in areas of downtown Morgantown known for panhandling and gathering areas for persons who often engage in panhandling and loitering activities:

- High Street, next to the former Wild Mountain Bakery
- At the corner of High & Wall Streets, on the East side of High Street
- In front of the Morgantown Public Library on Spruce Street

- In front of the Mountain Line bus depot, located at Hazel Ruby McQuain Park

The United Way and the City of Morgantown would like to encourage residents to consider these meters while they are downtown for Independence Day Festivities.

"Remember as you walk downtown and enjoy the parade that not everyone you will see has a home to go back to," said Sheets. "Even if you hesitate to donate directly to someone in need, please consider dropping your change in one of the secure Power of Change donation meters."

The program is also still seeking sponsorship from local businesses. Attached, find the sponsorship letter provided to downtown businesses last year.

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